



# PAPERS BARCELONA 2018 CONFERENCE

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## ■ Panel 69: How to newly grasp social remittances?

*Chairs:* Dusan Drbohlav (Charles University in Prague)

*Discussants:* Izabela Grabowska (SWPS University of Social Sciences, Center of Migration Research) and Eva Janska (Charles University)

### ***Panel Abstract:***

“Reality” and researchers have recently assigned importance to so-called social remittances (Levitt 1998). These are ideas, norms, practices (behaviors), identities and social capital that flow from receiving to sending country communities (Levitt 1998, Levitt, Lamba-Nieves 2011). This newly gained experience may but need not importantly contribute to the development of the country of migrant’s origin. It seems very important to explore the extent, nature, and strategies of remitting while trying to uncover realities in both country of destination and origin. Apparently, social remittances are intrinsically transnational, being transmitted through return migration, migrant visits, and exchanges of information. Overall, it is a new field, however, still lacking enough empirical findings gained via diverse methodological approaches and from various regional and cultural contexts, thereby also missing significant conceptual refinements. Four presentations within the panel will try to enrich the knowledge via new empirical studies which are discussed through various conceptual frameworks - e.g. theory of modernization (Inglehart, Welzel 2005), concept of conflicting cleavages (Lipset, Rokkan 1967) or sensitising concept (Merton 1996). Both qualitative and quantitative methods are applied. Whereas three presentations spring from a common comparative research project (supported by the Czech Science Foundation) on Moldovan migrants in Czechia (Prague) and Italy (Torino), the fourth one deals with Poles in the United Kingdom and three selected localities in Poland. Thus, the panel sheds some new light on migrants’ social remittances and their potential and real effects upon development of two different post-communist countries – Moldova and Poland.

### ***Paper 1:***

*Authors:* Dita Čermáková, Markéta Seidlová and Lenka Pavelková (Charles University in Prague)

*Title:* Migrant values and social remittances across the contemporary migration-development nexus: the case of Moldovans in Czechia

Migration theory and international policy recognise that migrant remittances play significant roles in shaping economic, social, and political transformations in origins and destinations. However, influential explanatory and policy frameworks do not pay close attention to how migrants experience and use values. When trying to understand the issue in a more complex way, we evaluate Ingleharts’ concept of

a shift from modern to post-modern society and theory of modernization, social remittances, and Lipset and Rokkan's concept of conflicting cleavages. We bring these frameworks together by proposing three testable propositions. First, migrants acquire and experience values in transnational ways by comparing their current situation and their former life. Second, we evaluate the tenet of social remittances and the migration-development nexus that values experienced in a destination are transferred back to the origin. In contrast to modernization theory, which sees the predictable diffusion of post-materialistic characteristics and "copying" from destination to origin, we examine context specificity by studying the historic and geographic patterns of cleavages in the origin society. Third, the use of values through migration networks both responds to, and reinforces underlying cleavages, and becomes part of a constitutive explanation of continuing structural inequalities between origins and destinations. To test the three propositions, we conducted 28 semi-structured interviews with Moldovan migrants in Czechia. The interviews were conducted between January and March 2017.

### ***Paper 2:***

*Authors:* Izabela Grabowska (SWPS University of Social Sciences, Center of Migration Research)

*Title:* Social remittances: Channels of diffusion

The main aim of the presentation would be to explore the hidden, unobvious role of migration as a channel of diffusion complementary to other channels such as global media, European Funds etc. in the process of social change at the local level in Poland. The presentation would claim that modernisation through European Funds and cultural diffusion are not enough to impact on the development of human capital. There is a human factor needed to accelerate it. Migrants both return and transnational (via skype and other contacts) can act as local agents and accelerators of change. The presentation analyses opportunity structures necessarily to activate their agency. The presentation will be a theoretically driven adaptation of theory (Layder 1998) of diffusion of innovations (Rogers 2003) and sensitising concept (Merton 1996) of social remittances coined by Levitt (1998). This theoretical combination was adapted in the multi-sited longitudinal qualitative research in the following communities in Poland - Sokolka (Podlasie Region), Pszczyna (Silesia) and Trzebnica (Lower Silesia) - with different histories of partitions, migration and level of development. The research (funded by National Science Centre Poland) was conducted on both sites of the migration network: besides Poland in various locations in the UK where migrants originating from these communities resided. The Polish site of the research was a both ethnographic and sociological longitudinal panel (Boccagni 2014) with three courses of visits and interviews in the selected locations within the span of two years. The study is based on 150 in-depth interviews.

### ***Paper 3:***

*Authors:* Pietro Cingolani (FIERI and University of Turin) and Francesco Vietti (FIERRI and University of Milano Bicocca)

*Title:* "My children think differently". Transnationalism, social remittances and intergenerational differences among Moldovan migrants in Italy

The relation between transnational behavior of migrants, social remittances and intergenerational transmission has been the subject of several studies in southern Europe and more broadly in the Mediterranean region (Barwick 2017; Cingolani, Ricucci 2014; Fokkema 2011; Wessendorf 2013). We

intend to make an original contribution to this debate by analyzing the case of Moldovan migration to Italy. This is a twenty year-old migration system, mainly female-driven, with a significant economic and social impact both in the destination country and in the country of origin. Scholars have paid significant attention to the study of economic remittances and transnational ties between first generation migrant mothers and family members back in Moldova (Borodak, Tichit 2014; Marchetti, Venturini 2014; Vietti 2012; Pinger 2010). The presence of children reunited with their parents or born in emigration raises new questions and makes the interpretation of this phenomenon more complex. This paper is based on a qualitative research and on the first results of a survey with 200 first- and second-generation Moldovan migrants in the city of Turin. We investigated the relation between integration and transnational behaviors across generations. Parents have lived in Italy often trapped in occupational and socially segregated niches, while their children have opportunities to develop a greater social mobility and to strengthen cosmopolitan affiliations. These conditions result in different relations with both the origin and settlement countries, different remittance behaviours (both social and economic), and different forms of civic and political participation.

#### ***Paper 4:***

*Authors:* Dusan Drbohlav, Zdeněk Čermák, Eva Janska and Dagmar Dzúrová (Charles University in Prague)

*Title:* Social remittances of Moldovans staying in Czechia – quantitative approach

The main aims of this presentation are: 1) searching for relationships between a character of social remittances (such as types, size, frequency etc.) and: a) migrants' psychological characteristics (basic personality dimensions – BFI-10), b) migrants' health characteristics, c) embedding of Moldovans in Czech society (measured via length and type of their stay, their future migratory plans and strategies). We try to contribute via this analysis to the actual debate about what transnational way of life of the current Moldovan migrants does mean for both the host and mother society and how social (but also financial) remittances really (and potentially) impact on a development of Moldova. As already mentioned, as far as theoretical/conceptual matters are concerned, we apply well-known concepts of transnationalism and social remittances (e.g. Vertovec 2009, Levitt, Lamba-Nieves 2011). This paper is based on a questionnaire survey of 200 Moldovan migrants who came to Czechia/Central Bohemian region. Only legally residing adult respondents (be it with Romanian or Moldovan passports, but originally living in Moldova) were selected (in different sectors of the economy), though some of them when working had fallen into irregular status (those who do not hold a Romanian passport). For evaluating our data we apply a stepwise regression model.

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